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From: Gretchen Heinrich [actionalert@aclunc.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2007 2:23 AM
To: sunshine_reform_task_force@sanjoseca.gov
Subject: Access to Public Records / SJPD

Feb 22, 2007

Sunshine Reform Task Force
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Sunshine Reform Task Force,

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of our community. I deeply appreciate the time you are devoting to make our government more transparent to the public.

I am writing to urge you to recommend a strong policy of openness with regard to San Jose Police Department records. As you draft your recommendations to the San Jose City Council, please include strong rules guaranteeing public access to local law enforcement records.

Currently, the San Jose Police Department routinely denies public access to its incident and use-of-force reports.

Other police departments aren't nearly as secretive as ours. The San Francisco and Oakland police departments are both examples of law enforcement agencies that are much more open with the public.

Law-enforcement agencies depend on public trust to do an effective job of ensuring public safety. Unfortunately, current SJPD secrecy needlessly undermines that very trust. I urge the Sunshine Reform Task Force to recommend policies that promote openness and transparency in all of our city's departments -- including SJPD.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Heinrich
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San Jose, CA 95136-2606